

FLITWICK LOWER SCHOOL



Child Protection Policy Guidelines

1. Rationale

The school, as a caring organisation, seeks to promote the welfare, health, safety and guidance of every child. The school aims to create and maintain a safe environment for children and to manage situations where there are child welfare concerns.

2. Aims

1. To enable all staff to be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, and know to whom they should report concerns or suspicions.
2. To elect a designated member of staff with knowledge and skills in recognising and acting upon child welfare concerns. This designated person will act as a source of expertise and advice.
3. To make all staff aware of the child protection procedures established by the Area Child Protection Committee.
4. To enable the designated member of staff to receive appropriate training to be effective in the role.
5. To help to counter the acceptance of child abuse through teaching which heightens individual's rights and responsibilities and increases assertiveness.
6. To liaise with other agencies involved in the protection of children
7. Parents are informed of the school policy in the prospectus.

3. Practice

1. The Child Protection Manual of Procedures is displayed in the staffroom. This should be accessible to all staff including NQT's, part-time teachers and newly appointed staff.
2. The Chair of Governors will be informed of any referral made but individual children will not be named. Child protection issues are a standing item where appropriate on the agenda for Governors meetings.

The following whole school approach will be encouraged:-

3. An ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints valued, where they are encouraged to talk, are listened to and self-esteem is built.
4. To provide suitable support and guidance so that children have appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties.
5. To work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children.
6. Vigilance in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms and procedures to be followed.
7. Monitoring children who have been identified as at risk, keeping in a secure location, clear records of children's progress, maintaining confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences, as appropriate.
8. To provide child protection training regularly to school staff.
9. To contribute to an inter-agency approach to child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.
10. To use the curriculum to raise children's awareness and build confidence so that children have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.

4. **The Children's Act**

This came into force in England & Wales in 1991 and has the following implications for our school :-

- a. The Headteacher needs to look into a child's family history to establish who has parental responsibility for them.
- b. School records must accurately reflect the home situation.
- c. Consent must be obtained for school trips, medical attention etc. from those with parental responsibility.
- d. Those with parental responsibility have the right to see a child's school report.
- e. If a child is hurt in an accident, contact must be made to those with parental responsibility.
- f. We have the right to do what is reasonable in all circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare (Section 3C5).

5. **Monitoring and Record Keeping**

We can play a vital role in helping abused children and those who are suspected of being abused, by monitoring and recording certain aspects of the child's progress and behaviour in school.

When is recording necessary?

- a. When there is concern in school over
marks on a child's body
unusual/different behaviour
mood changes
puzzling statements or stories from the child
information from others.
- b. If requested by another agency, eg. following a case conference.

Who will record ?

- c. Teachers who are responsible for children in their care.
- d. Non-teaching staff involved with the child, notes on a piece of paper handed to the designated teacher.

What will be recorded ?

- e. Patterns of attendance.
- f. Change in mood
- g. Changes in classroom functions.
- h. Relationships with peers and adults.
- i. Behaviour
- j. Statements made by children - using their exact words, comments, stories, news, drawings etc.
- k. General demeanour and appearance.
- l. Parental interest and comments.
- m. Home/Family changes.
- n. Medicals
- o. Response to PE/Sport
- p. Injuries/marks, past and present.

How will it be recorded ?

- q. Information will be recorded in the Child Abuse File by the designated teacher using, if appropriate, a Bedfordshire Education Service Report form for onward referral to Social Services, Education Welfare Service and the Education Service. A verbatim report in the child's response or an account should be written by the reporting teacher or adult.
- r. Information will be recorded in factual, non-emotive, non-judgmental terms, with note of the time, date and context.

- s. The file will be kept in the Headteacher's office and confidentiality will be respected.
- t. The designated teacher in consultation with the Headteacher will decide when to start and finish monitoring and decide on further action eg. contact with parents/social worker etc.

6. General Principles of Confidentiality

- i. All staff are aware that personal information about a child and his/her family is confidential and should only be given to an appropriate person.
- ii. If abuse is suspected, accurate information, should be given only to the designated teacher immediately, other staff need know only enough to prepare them to act with sensitivity to a distressed child.
- iii. The child, depending on age, should be kept informed of who knows and why they know.
- iv. Teachers should not, in any circumstances remove a child's clothing. They should only note those marks which they have noticed or which have been brought to their attention by the child. No further examination should be carried out.
- v. If staff hear worrying information about children from other parents, neighbours or other children, this should be passed on to the designated teacher.
- vi. If there is a threat to a child's safety and welfare, all staff may have to be alerted to watch for signs of abuse. In such circumstances the family will be informed on the monitoring arrangement.

7. Implementation and Review

- 1. This policy will be made known to all staff, parents and governors.
- 2. The policy will be reviewed annually.
- 3. The policy will be taken into consideration when updating school development plans by consultation with the appropriate staff.
- 3. Reference to the policy will assist in the identification of in-service requirements.

Policy reviewed : January 2004

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

APPENDICES

1. Child Protection Process.
2. Dealing with Disclosures.
3. The Role of the Designated Member of Staff for Child Protection
4. Role of the Designated Governor for Child Protection.